

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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- ① A hearing aid having a shell enclosing one or more hearing aid components, the shell including a substantially translucent or transparent faceplate, wherein at least a portion of at least one hearing aid component is tinted.
 2. The hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the hearing aid is insertable into an ear canal.
 3. The hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein substantially all of the shell is translucent or transparent and is tinted the same color as the at least one hearing aid component.
 4. The hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the hearing aid is disposable.
 5. The hearing aid of Claim 2 further comprising a cord extending from the hearing aid for pulling the hearing aid out of the ear canal, the cord also being tinted.
 6. The hearing aid of Claim 2 wherein the faceplate is externally visible after the hearing aid is inserted into the ear canal, the faceplate being tinted the same color as the at least one hearing aid component.
 7. The hearing aid of Claim 6 wherein the tint is selected from the following group of colors: gold, copper, tan, brown, and flesh colored.
 8. The hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the hearing aid components include a microphone, signal processing circuitry, a power source, or a receiver.

9. The hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the component is tinted by anodization techniques, heat treatments, or by silk screen methods.
- 5 (10) A hearing aid having a shell enclosing one or more hearing aid components, the shell being substantially translucent or transparent, wherein at least a portion of at least one hearing aid component is tinted.
11. The hearing aid of Claim 10 wherein the shell is tinted the same color as the at least one hearing aid component.
12. The hearing aid of Claim 11 wherein the tint is selected from the following group of colors: gold, copper, tan, brown, and flesh colored.
- 10 13. The hearing aid of Claim 10 wherein the hearing aid is a behind-the-ear type hearing aid.
14. The hearing aid of Claim 10 wherein the hearing aid is insertable into an ear canal.
- 15 (15) A hearing aid, comprising:
15 a microphone which translates acoustic energy into electrical signals;
signal processing circuitry which processes the electrical signals provided by the microphone;
a receiver which converts the processed electrical signals into acoustic energy;
20 a power source connectable to the signal processing circuitry; and
a shell enclosing one or more of the microphone, the signal processing circuitry, and the receiver, the shell including a substantially transparent or

translucent faceplate, wherein at least a portion of the microphone, the signal processing circuitry, or the receiver is tinted.

16. The hearing aid of Claim 15 wherein the hearing aid is insertable into an ear canal.
- 5 17. The hearing aid of Claim 15 wherein substantially all of the shell is translucent or transparent and is tinted.
18. The hearing aid of Claim 15 wherein the hearing aid is disposable.
19. The hearing aid of Claim 16 further comprising a cord extending from the hearing aid for pulling the hearing aid out of the ear canal, the cord also being tinted.
- 10 20. The hearing aid of Claim 16 wherein the faceplate is externally visible after the hearing aid is inserted into the ear canal, the faceplate being tinted the same color as the tinted hearing aid component.
21. The hearing aid of Claim 15 wherein the tint is selected from the following group of colors: gold, copper, tan, brown, and flesh colored.
- 15 22. A hearing aid, comprising:
a microphone which translates acoustic energy into electrical signals;
signal processing circuitry which processes the electrical signals provided by the microphone;
20 a receiver which converts the processed electrical signals into acoustic energy;
a power source connectable to the signal processing circuitry; and

a shell enclosing one or more of the microphone, the signal processing circuitry, and the receiver, the shell being substantially transparent or translucent, wherein at least a portion of the microphone, the signal processing circuitry, or the receiver is tinted.

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23. The hearing aid of Claim 22 wherein the shell is tinted the same color as the at least one hearing aid component.

24. The hearing aid of Claim 23 wherein the tint is selected from the following group of colors: gold, copper, tan, brown, and flesh colored.

10 25. The hearing aid of Claim 22 wherein the hearing aid is a behind-the-ear type hearing aid.

26. The hearing aid of Claim 22 wherein the hearing aid is insertable into an ear canal.

15 (27) A hearing aid comprising at least one tinted hearing aid component disposed within a transparent or translucent shell of the hearing aid.

(28) The hearing aid of Claim 27 wherein substantially all of the shell is tinted.

(29) A method of concealing a hearing aid worn by a user, comprising:
providing a shell enclosing one or more hearing aid components, the shell including a substantially translucent or transparent faceplate; and
20 tinting at least a portion of at least one hearing aid component.

30. The method of Claim 29 wherein substantially all of the shell is translucent or transparent, further comprising tinting substantially all of the shell.

31. The method of Claim 29 further comprising tinting a cord that extends from the hearing aid for pulling the hearing aid out of an ear canal of the user.
32. The method of Claim 29 further comprising tinting the faceplate.
33. The method of Claim 29 further comprising tinting the at least one hearing aid component gold, copper, tan, brown, or flesh colored.
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34. The method of Claim 1 wherein the component is tinted by anodization techniques, heat treatments, or by silk screen methods.
- (35.) A method of concealing a hearing aid worn by a user, comprising:
providing a shell enclosing one or more hearing aid components, the
10 shell being substantially translucent or transparent; and
tinting at least a portion of at least one hearing aid component.
36. The method of Claim 35 further comprising tinting the shell the same color as the at least one hearing aid component.
37. The method of Claim 36 further comprising tinting the at least one hearing aid component and shell gold, copper, tan, brown, or flesh colored.
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38. The method of Claim 35 wherein the hearing aid is a behind-the-ear type hearing aid.
39. The method of Claim 35 wherein the hearing aid is insertable into an ear canal of the user.

40. The method of Claim 35 wherein the shell includes a faceplate that is also tinted.

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